

Small World + World Elementary = a world of difference

◆ Quality education is now available through Grade 6.

NASHUA - From infant to grade six, World Elementary and Small World Country Day School offers a continuum of quality and enriched education, nurturing family and child support, and summer camp in an exquisite environment in which all children can flourish. The added value of a Small World Country Day School and World Elementary experience makes a distinctively positive difference in the life of the growing child.

Fulfilling another vision of the founders of Small World, World Elementary is becoming a full scale reality at 138 Spit Brook Road in Nashua with full expansion to grade six for the coming school year. Addressing the needs of children and families from infant through grade six with quality and enriched education and nurturing has been the agenda since the school opened with thirty-eight children on Daniel Webster Highway in 1980. This will mark the coming to fruition of a dream that began over twenty years ago.

Statistics and brain research are increasingly noting the incredible impact of quality experiences in the early years of a child's life. World Elementary and Small World Country Day School has always been on the cutting edge of providing this for children throughout the area while offering consistency, familiarity and family support at the most vital developmental time for children.

With a mission to nurture and enhance the development of the "whole" unique child while supporting and enriching the life of the whole diverse family, World Elementary and Small World Country Day School provides a setting where a child is safe and nurtured in a high-quality environment. Engraved on a large marble plaque, greeting all who enter, is a clear statement of how the school perceives its children: "Through these Doors Walk the Greatest Kids in the World."

State-licensed and inspected, the school is accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs, the accrediting branch of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and serves as the only New Hampshire Department of Education approved private elementary school in the Nashua area to offer programs for such an age range at one site.

With the knowledge that young children learn through play and at their own unique rates, the school is impeccably designed to promote uninterrupted indoor and outdoor play for all ages, particularly in the Country Day School where learning through play is a child's work.

The World Elementary wing is conceptually set up to foster academic thinking and hands-on learning, thereby addressing the "whole" child's needs.

The quality and uniqueness of the school are reflected in the facility's distinctive architecture. Inside, colorful and imaginative hand-painted murals focusing on character, literacy, families and children welcome visitors. Light, bright state-of-the-art spaces support the varied programs, most of which are flexibly scheduled allowing parents to choose the hours and days that are best for their children.

The school's Executive Director Kathy Nelson, is very proud of the beautiful 23,000-square-foot facility and its resources. Located on six wooded acres, the building boasts a computer lab, music room, multi-functional "Great Room" that serves as a cafeteria and gym, alternately, and a fully equipped kitchen which is very capably supervised by Cindy Campbell with a keen eye on nutrition, sanitation and food presentation.

The elementary wing incorporates a library and a Language/Art Room, as well as, two large, airy classrooms connected to the main building through a bright "greenhouse" area. All classrooms in the school have the added convenience of their own bathrooms and telephones. The entrance to the school is controlled by a magnetic card system for enhanced security, safety and accountability.

Appearances are important in judging schools, but they are certainly not the only consideration. The philosophy, staff and curriculum do not seem to have any trouble fulfilling the expectations that come with such a top-notch facility.

At World Elementary and Small World CDS the focus is on enrichment and individualization. This occurs in developmentally appropriate small classes that emphasize literacy, character, diversity/multi-culturalism, conflict resolution, negotiation/problem-solving/communication skills and family uniqueness, in order to give a strong base to the children whose future will be global in scope.

A common strategy used in the Elementary Program is looping. That means a teacher stays with his/her students for two academic years rather than the traditional one. The school found this to be so very successful because it allows for accelerated student learning in the



Miss Buxton's class at World Elementary watches as Principal Kathy Nelson signs a bill passing a resolution to offer chocolate milk at lunch.



Mrs. Cohen, technology specialist & associate director of elementary studies, works with a student in the computer lab.

ity and bonding. Small child/teacher ratios in all classes encourage many personal interactions between the adults and children while fostering self-esteem and communication on a very important level. World Elementary provides a wide variety of resources for those with different learning styles thereby nurturing individualized and emerging curricula.

Ann Cohen, the school's associate director of elementary studies, explains, "The school's early elementary program emphasizes math and language because these skills are at the foundation of all future learning. Science and social studies basics are also covered. The middle and upper-elementary programs continue this emphasis placing an added importance on science and social studies in the core curriculum. In language arts, World Elementary spends a great deal of time developing the students' writing process, first constructing thoughts, then sentences, then paragraphs on given topics. Journal writing is also encouraged.

Reading, phonics, spelling, vocabulary, grammar, speaking, listening, literature and various expressions of comprehension are also vital components of our language arts program. By the end of the third grade a student should be able to express his/her thoughts on a subject and answer a question in clear and concise written paragraph, demonstrating both comprehension of the question and correct grammar, spelling and appropriate vocabulary. By the end of the sixth grade, our students should be able to write various forms of literary compositions, and discuss, comprehend and appreciate age-appropriate literature. They should be able to use their language-arts skills to read, understand, reason, explore, discuss and write about subject matter including math, science and social studies."

"In math," she continues, "our objective is to reach beyond the computational math basics by delving into mathematical reasoning, relationships, communication, problem solving and applied mathematics. Mathematical areas we cover in increasing depth through the grades include basic calculation (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division), estimation, relationships, fractions, decimals, geometry, problem solving, communication, measurement, data analysis and statistics, patterns and elementary algebra. As students progress through World Elementary they should be able to demonstrate not only increased computational competence in the areas above but also the ability to reason, explain and justify their answers in both verbal and written form."

"Regarding staff, our teachers are our greatest asset," says Nelson. "Our children are renewed, daily, through their interactions with such dedicated, experienced, inspired and caring child advocates and teachers. We are blessed with precisely the quality of faculty needed to create an environment in which all children can flourish."

Education and commitment are important factors that influence the hiring of teachers at World Elementary and Small World Country Day School. School Director Lynn Ouellette, explains that, "degreed and experienced teachers, specifically those with early childhood degrees for the Country Day School and elementary-education degrees for the Elementary Program, are sought out for the school staff. Only those who support the school's mission and philosophy, focusing on the child and family empowerment, and who are sensitive to the needs of young children are selected." She reiterated that, "both the administration and teachers aspire to the same goal, that being the school motto of 'Excellence in the Early Years.'"

"In addition," she continues "the school's curriculum is carefully chosen and continually enriched and updated through teacher collaboration and professional development ideas." She speaks with first-hand knowledge as she has been with Small World for almost twenty years.

Lynn helps to organize the comprehensive program through which academics are presented in a developmentally appropriate manner for the Country Day School children. This work is supported for World Elementary by Karen Stone, who is the school's kindergarten Liaison and grade 1 teacher (soon to loop to grade 2 with her students), and Barbara Carey, assistant director and reading specialist.

"We are teaching skills for life," Kathy Nelson continues. "A child learns over eighty percent of lifetime knowledge and skills by age eight. Our dedication to ensure that they learn them properly and in-depth is reflected in our mission, and we are constantly assessing our effectiveness toward this goal."

In addition to the curriculum guided by their classroom teacher and their own interest, during a typical week at World Elementary and Small World CDS, the children have the unique opportunity to spend time with specialists.

They are exposed to another culture, another language, and another window to view the world in which they live, through French class with Madame Doxey. Students begin their French voyage in the early grades through conversational French while exploring French geography, culture, and art, through hands-on activities, music, games, crafts and dramatic expression. In the upper elementary grades, students add French grammar and written expression to their repertoire.

All students from kindergarten and up take music, adding chorus as they advance to grade two, with music teacher, Laurie Collins, who presents the joy and wonder of music and song to the children. They learn about and experience harmony, rhythm, creative movement, dancing, musical instruments, cultural music and music related to classroom themes. Older elementary students learn music theory and practice the performing arts.

The focus of World Elementary's Technology Program is to use technology to enhance, enrich and augment classroom learning. The programs presented by Ann Cohen, the technology director, in the school computer lab and in the classrooms depend on what topics are being studied and where students can best benefit from the curriculum enrichment. In grades four, five and six, students also begin specific technology skills, typing, word processing, spreadsheets and working with databases.

The Physical Education Program at World Elementary under the guidance of

Ann Froncke, focuses on both the physical and social sides of sports and fitness. Physically, the emphasis is on increasing student coordination, fitness, agility, stamina and knowledge of, and experience in sports and games, culminating in successful participation in the President's National Physical Fitness Award program annually.

Socially, sports and games are used as a springboard to explore important issues such as team building, cooperation, team spirit, personal goal setting, problem solving, coping with failure, sportsmanship and peer coaching. Nutrition and hygiene are also important parts of the elementary physical education experience.

Our Elementary Art Program, taught by Angela Lucido, who is also the art director at *The Telegraph* newspaper, is designed to enhance creative expression while encouraging the students to experiment with many different mediums and perspectives.

Extracurricular opportunities for private musical instrument lessons, dance and karate are available for children, as well as the option to participate in scouting and cheerleading for those who are eligible.

Many students take advantage of our wrap-around before- and after-school care. Our after-school program (Big Kids City) is a relaxing extension of the school day with numerous and exciting special and daily activities occurring in various areas throughout the complex.

Small World's original purpose was to address the needs of thirty-eight three to five year-olds. Today, the school serves approximately 450 families of children from ages six weeks through thirteen years of age on a continuum, with developmentally appropriate academic and recreation programs.

This includes full wrap-around child care, before and after school with transportation, vacation/holiday programs and Super Summer Camp, including swimming in two pools, camping and nature activities, all on-site, with additional activities and field trips offered off-site.

World Elementary and Small World Country Day School is open Monday through Friday, from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., offering nutritionally balanced breakfast, lunch and three snacks, daily. It is centrally located with the beautifully landscaped entrance designed for easy drop off and pick up. Close proximity to Nashua's Roby Park provides access to ball fields, ice skating, open spaces and sledding.

Parents' Night Out is featured on the third Saturday night of each month for

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the school's families. This provides parents an evening out, while their children are in a safe and familiar environment with their friends, from 6 p.m. until midnight.

"We take the mandate to educate, nurture and support our children and their families very seriously at Small World. Our ultimate responsibility is to be the best educators, role models and child advocates that we can possibly be. Every child deserves quality experiences in the early years when they make the most difference," concludes Kathy.

It appears that every aspect of child care, education and family support has been carefully thought out and addressed with sensitivity and thoroughness here. World Elementary and Small World Country Day School has received high marks from a great many area families and its continued growth reflects on its quality and its dedication to excellence and to responding to community needs. This past summer they added a special camp structure on site and redesigned the "Great Room" space to better facilitate indoor organized team sports for the children.

Assistant Director Sheila O'Riordan, whose main focus is the financial health and value added by a World Elementary education, points out the main reasons why she feels World Elementary is a good choice for all children. "Our school encourages parent/teacher communication and a parent/teacher/student team approach to the learning process.

Frequent, valuable feedback from and to former/current/future teachers of the children, including specialists, helps in guiding our children's academic progress and development. Teaching and learning is approached from multiple angles recognizing the fact that students have different learning styles that should be matched to teachers' teaching styles, whenever possible, for maximum learning experiences. Our curricula, which is constantly being updated to exceed state and national standards, is organized for seamless, coordinated progression from K through sixth grade. In addition, we have various in-class options for advancement for students capable of additional challenge, and academic support for students who are having difficulty in certain areas of learning—and our smaller class sizes allow for greater individual attention for each student. Our children feel safe and see school as a positive experience. What more could we ask for in a program for our children?"

Christopher Jenks of Harvard once said, "If you want the best for your child, you must not only have him/her physically and mentally ready to learn, but you must put the child in a favorable environment with other children similarly prepared and motivated." If we accept these two factors as determinants of a child's success in school, this school is truly the best of all possible worlds for every child.

